

FILLING OUT YOUR CAL GRANT GRADE POINT AVERAGE VERIFICATION FORM FOR 2002-03



If you wish to apply for a Cal Grant A, B or C Award and have never received a Cal Grant Award before, the information below is intended for you.

The California Student Aid Commission (Commission) uses the information provided on both the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form (GPA) to determine eligibility for the Cal Grant A, B and C programs. If you complete and file both a FAFSA and a new verified GPA by the March 2, 2002, postmark deadline, you will be considered for a Cal Grant.

Remember, It Takes Two Forms!

Applying for a Cal Grant Award is a two-step process. You must 1) submit a GPA Verification Form, and 2) fill out and submit a FAFSA. Your 2002-03 FAFSA must be submitted on or before **March 2, 2002**.

You can fill out the paper form of the FAFSA or apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. This year, if you apply online for financial aid, you will be able to receive your personal identification number (PIN) online in 72 hours. You can apply for a PIN online even if you file a paper FAFSA. To set up your PIN, visit the FAFSA Web site at www.pin.ed.gov.

You can learn more about the FAFSA process, including the quick online process, at www.fafsa.ed.gov or you can contact your school's financial aid office or the Commission. See back page of this brochure for Commission contact information.

Tips for Students

- **You are responsible for the timely submission of your GPA Verification Form.** Some schools submit a list of verified GPAs directly to the Commission. If your school does so, it will *not* be necessary for you to submit the enclosed GPA Verification Form. *However, you must confirm that your school will submit your GPA or submit your own form.*
- **Already in college?** If you are already in college and are applying for a new Cal Grant, you must submit the enclosed GPA Verification Form to be considered for an award. (The Commission does not retain GPA Verification Forms from prior years.) If you have **accumulated 24 or more** college semester units, or the equivalent, go to your college for GPA verification information. If you have completed fewer than 24 college semester units, go to your high school for GPA verification information.
- **Re-established GPA?** You may wish to improve (or re-establish) your high school grade point average by taking some community college courses. You can re-establish your GPA by completing at least 16 cumulative units of Bachelor of

Arts transferrable/applicable credit for academic coursework at an accredited California Community College, with at least a 2.0 community college GPA. High school seniors who have completed at least 16 college units, but not more than 23 units, in order to improve their GPA can request that their community college submit a re-established GPA for them.

If the GPA provided on the GPA Verification Form is a "re-established GPA," the community college official must indicate this in the appropriate oval in Section A of the Form.

- **Are you in high school?** If you have completed 16 community college units, you may use either your re-established college or high school GPA. (You should use your highest GPA.)
- **Renewing your award?** If you already have a Cal Grant A or B or Community College Reserve award and wish to renew that award, please do *not* complete a GPA Verification Form. Instead, you must complete a 2002-03 FAFSA and list the college you will be attending for fall 2002 in Step Six. (The college you list and attend will certify your Cal Grant renewal eligibility).

Guidelines for School Officials

SECTION A

School Verified GPA and School Code *(To be completed by a school official.)*

An authorized high school or college official must complete all items under this section. The signature of a high school or college official is required by law and certifies that, under penalty of perjury, the reported GPA is true and accurate and may be subject to review by the Commission or its designee.

Calculating the GPA

GPA Definition

A high school GPA, as defined in California Education Code (C.E.C.) Section 69432 (h), is calculated on a 4.0 scale, using all academic coursework for the sophomore year, the summer following the sophomore year, the junior year, and the summer following the junior year. The high school GPA excludes physical education (PE), reserve officer training corps (ROTC), and remedial courses. Failing grades for courses that have not been retaken prior to fall 2001 must be included. However, for high school graduates who apply after their senior year, "high school GPA" includes senior year coursework.

A college or community college GPA is defined, per C.E.C. 69432 (d), as one that is calculated on the basis of all college work completed. Excluded from the calculations are nontransferable units that are units and courses not counted in the computation for admission to a California public institution of higher education that grants a baccalaureate degree.

When completing this portion of the GPA Verification Form, calculate the student's GPA on a 4.00 scale to two decimal places. (Do *not* use a weighted scale.) Convert any grades with extra weighting for honors and advanced placement classes to a 4.00 scale before calculating the GPA.

Student Categories

Place each student into one of the categories indicated below and include the following grades in the GPA calculation for undergraduate Cal Grant applicants:

- **Current high school seniors:** Include all sophomore- and junior-year grades, excluding physical education (PE) and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), and remedial coursework as defined by your institution. Accelerated juniors graduating in spring 2002 should only include sophomore and junior grades and summer school grades earned following the sophomore year. "High school" includes all secondary schools accredited by the Western Association of

Schools and Colleges or which have a University of California-approved course list.

- If no GPA is available: A GED or SAT or ACT score can be submitted instead.
- Students who are *not currently attending high school* and have completed fewer than 24 semester college units, 36 quarter units, or the equivalent prior to fall 2001: Include sophomore, junior and senior-year high school grades, excluding PE and ROTC.
- Students who are *not currently enrolled in high school* and have completed at least 24 semester college units, 36 quarter units, or the equivalent, by the time of certification. Include all college grades known to the reporting official for which the student receives credit at the reporting institution, regardless of grade received, by the time of certification.

Completing the GPA Form

GPA of Student - Fill in all three spaces and all three corresponding ovals for the GPA. By signing, you are certifying, under penalty of perjury, that the GPA was calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Cal Grant program. Any questions regarding this form can be directed to the Commission.

Note: GPAs will only be accepted from schools that have either received accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), (or another regional accrediting agency if not in WASC region), or have a U.C.-approved course list. Students not attending such schools may provide either an SAT or ACT test score (from a test taken within the last five years).

GPA Verifier's School Code - Fill in all six spaces and corresponding ovals for the school code of the high school or college responsible for providing the student's verified GPA.

High schools should use the College Board school code; colleges should use the federal Title IV school code. These codes can be obtained online at www.collegeboard.com or by calling (800) 433-3243.

GPA Based on High School Coursework - Fill in the applicable oval if the GPA provided is a high school GPA.

Re-established GPA - Fill in the applicable oval if the GPA is a re-established GPA.

GPA Veri

Guidelines for Students

If you have verified that your school will submit your GPA for you, you must complete Section B of the GPA Verification Form, and your school official must complete Section A.

- Please use **black ink only**. (If you make an error, please fill out another GPA form.)
- Make and keep a photocopy of this Cal Grant GPA Verification form.
- Use the enclosed envelope and mail this original form by the March 2, 2002, postmark-filing deadline.
- Obtain a U.S. Postal Service certificate of mailing for \$.75.
- If using another envelope, mail it to the Commission. See back panel for the Commission mailing address.
- When received, the information on your GPA form will be scanned electronically, so please *do not* bend or fold the form or show any stray marks.

SECTION B

Student Identification.

1. **Student Name** - Print your full name as it appears on your Social Security card - entering your last name, then first name.
2. **Birth date** - Enter your birth date, with Month, Day, Year.
3. **Address** - Enter the address you listed on your FAFSA.
4. **Telephone number** - Enter your area code and telephone number at which you can be reached for questions.
5. **E-mail address** - Enter your e-mail address, if you have one. (Your e-mail address will remain confidential.)
6. **Test Scores** - ACT, SAT or GED test scores can be submitted instead of a GPA under the following circumstances:
 - You attended a high school or college outside of the United States and are unable to have those grades converted to a 4.00 scale.
 - You have been out of school for five years or more (a test score is optional).
 - Your school did not grade in a manner that can be readily converted to a 4.00 scale.
 - You participated in a home schooling program or attended an unaccredited school (a test score is required).

If any of the above apply to you, mark "Yes" and enclose an official copy of the testing organization's score report along with the GPA Verification Form, or the testing organization may submit the score report directly to the Commission. Return both documents no later than **March 2, 2002**. Scores from the California High School Proficiency Examination cannot be accepted, since it is not a nationally-administered examination. Grade reports, transcripts and other proficiency certificates are also not acceptable.

7. Social Security Number (SSN) - Fill in all nine spaces and corresponding ovals to indicate your SSN. You must list the same number as listed on your SSN card and your FAFSA.

Note: Valid SSNs do not begin with 8 or 9. If you believe your SSN begins with an 8 or 9, contact your local Social Security office to verify your number.

8. High School Graduation Date - Fill in all six spaces and corresponding ovals to indicate the **month** and **year** you graduated, or plan to graduate, from high school. Use two digits to indicate the month (e.g. January should appear as "01," November should appear as "11"). Please report all four digits of the year in which you graduate, or plan to graduate (e.g. 1984 should appear as "1 9 8 4," 2003 should appear as "2 0 0 3").

9. School Code - Students graduating from high school in spring 2002 should write in the College Board high school code number for their high school. This is the same code used for sending SAT test information to that high school. Your high school counselor will know the correct code to use. Students who will be in college for the spring 2002 school term should write in the federal code number of the college they will be attending in spring 2002. This is the same number as the federal Title IV school code used on the FAFSA. Look for the federal Title IV school codes at your college financial aid office, at your public library, on the Internet at www.ed.gov, or call the Commission toll free at 1-888-CA-GRANT (1-888-224-7268).

Students who are not in college or high school for the spring 2002 school term should leave this section blank.

10. Student Signature and Certification - This certifies that you have read these instructions and all attached information. Your signature means that the information provided in Section B is correct, and you understand that it is illegal to report false or misleading information on this form.

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How will I know if I Am Awarded a Cal Grant?

If you file both the FAFSA and a Cal Grant GPA Verification Form by the March 2, 2002, deadline date, you will receive a Cal Grant notification letter from the Commission.

If you do not receive correspondence regarding your application from the Commission by April 30, 2002, contact the Commission immediately. If you have any questions, please contact the Commission. See below for how to contact the Commission.

Additional Student Information

- Some colleges and universities (e.g. Stanford University and UC Santa Cruz) do not calculate GPAs for all students. If your institution does not calculate a GPA, you must submit ACT or SAT test scores in lieu of a GPA by the **March 2, 2002**, deadline.
- A GPA, or applicable test score (see Section A), is required to compete for a Cal Grant A, B, C and California Community College transfer awards. Consequently, if a verified GPA or valid test score is not mailed to the Commission by **March 2, 2002**, you will not be considered for these programs.
- Using the enclosed envelope, mail the GPA Verification Form to the Commission. Don't forget to purchase a \$0.75 U.S. Postal Service Certificate of Mailing. See below for Commission address.
- Respond promptly to all requests for additional information from the Commission and the colleges and universities to which you have applied. Include your name, SSN, and date of birth on all correspondence.
- Retain photocopies of your FAFSA, GPA Verification Form, and all other forms and correspondence regarding your application(s) for aid.

For More Information:

Contact Commission Customer Service Representatives:
By e-mail at: custsvcs@csac.ca.gov

By toll free telephone at:
1-888-CA GRANT (1-888-224-7268)

By mail at:
California Student Aid Commission
Grant Programs Customer Service
P.O. Box 419027
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9027

Visit the Commission Web site at:
www.csac.ca.gov

California Requirements

State and federal laws protect an individual's right to privacy regarding information pertaining to oneself. The California Information Practices Act of 1977 requires the following information be provided to financial aid applicants who are asked to supply information about themselves. The principal purpose for requesting information on this form is to determine your eligibility for financial aid. Commission policy and the policies of the postsecondary institutions to which you are applying for aid authorize maintenance of this information. Furnishing information that is requested on this form is mandatory. Failure to provide such information will delay and may even prevent your receipt of financial assistance. This form's information may be transmitted to other state agencies and the federal government if required by law. Individuals have the right of access to records established from information furnished on this form as it pertains to them. The Education Code of the State of California gives the Commission the authority (in consultation with postsecondary institutions) to make this form available.

The officials responsible for maintaining the information contained on this form are the Executive Director of the Commission and the financial aid administrators at the institutions to which you are applying for financial aid. The SSN is used to verify your identity under the record keeping systems established prior to January 1, 1975, pursuant to the authority of the Commission, the California State University, and California Community Colleges contained in Title 5, California Administrative Code Section 41201, and the authority of the Regents of the University of California under Article IX, Section 9, of the California Constitution. The Commission and California public postsecondary education institutions, in compliance with federal statutes and the Equal Protection Clause of the California Constitution, do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or physical disability in any of their policies, procedures or practices. Inquiries regarding these policies may be directed to the Commission and to the financial aid office of the school or college to which you are applying.

